

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

August 29, 2003

In Reply Refer To:
9400 (FA-500) P

EMS Transmission 08/29/03
Information Bulletin No. OF&A 2003-065

To: State Directors, State Fire Management Officers

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Subject: Annual BLM Aviation Management Conference

The BLM Aviation Program has many component parts: helicopter operations, SEATs, large air tankers, smokejumpers, ASMs and air attacks. Each year, at the conclusion of the active fire season, experts from these groups meet to discuss past performance, identify opportunities for improvement, and craft changes in policy and procedures. In the past, this has largely been done in a vacuum; each group (SEAT Managers, ASMs, etc.) meeting on their own without involvement from other aviation personnel. State Aviation Managers and representatives from the National Aviation Office have had to make multiple trips to meet with these small groups, to hear their issues and work on producing solutions.

The week of October 27, 2003, BLM will hold a consolidated Aviation Conference which will include joint sessions of all BLM Aviation personnel and group breakout sessions by specialty. Attendees should include the NAO Staff, State Aviation Managers, Unit Aviation Managers, Exclusive Use Helicopter Managers, Aerial Supervision Pilots, Air Tactical Group Supervisors, Exclusive Use SEAT Managers, Air Tanker Base Managers, Dispatch Center Managers, members of the Aviation Mentor Program and Smokejumper Pilots. The combined number of attendees is estimated at 115 people.

The meeting is scheduled for Clackamas, Oregon. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Monarch Hotel and Conference Center at 12566 SE 93rd Avenue. Everyone will be responsible for making their own reservations, referencing the BLM/National Aviation Conference. Please call the hotel at 503-652-1515 or 1-800-492-8700 prior to September 27, 2003. Room charges are within government per diem rates. Free shuttle service from the airport is available by calling the Monarch at 503-652-1515. There are several restaurants within walking distance to the motel, so rental vehicles are not necessary.

Conference Format:

Monday	1300-1700	General Session
Tuesday	0800-1700	Specialty Group Breakouts
Wednesday	0800-1700	Specialty Group Breakouts
Thursday	0800-1700	SAMs and NAO

NOTE: All attendees should plan on attending Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Only the NAO staff and SAMs will attend the Thursday session. Make travel plans accordingly.

We believe this format will provide the following benefits:

- Substantial cost savings due to reduced travel
- Increased familiarity and cooperation between aviation functions and personnel.
- Opportunities to develop and impart a single consolidated Bureau Aviation Strategic Plan.
- Promotion of organizational identity and cohesion.
- Reduction in time and workload on speakers and presenters.

The conference will be held prior to the BLM National Fire and Aviation Conference so that issues raised by the Aviation Program will be available for consideration by the broader audience at the Fire and Aviation Conference. Issues identified during the aviation conference will be addressed over the winter months. A one day follow-up SAM/NAO meeting will be held in the spring to clarify new policy and procedures. This will provide the basis for aviation spring refreshers in each state.

If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact Dave Dash at 208-387-5448.

Signed by:
Larry E. Hamilton
Director
Office of Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
Pat Lewis
Supervisory Mgmt. Asst.
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Attachment
Map (1 pg.)

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